of this continuing exercise.

Supply of F-16 to Pakistan

6643. SHRI G.G. SWELL:
SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE:
SHRI MOHD. MASUD KHAN:
SHRI SARDA MOHANTY:
SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY:
DR. ISHWAR CHANDRA GUPTA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that US has finally decided to supply F-16 bombers to Pakistan in spite of a strong opposition of India;

(b) what are the major disastrous characteristics of F-16 bombers;

(c) what are the details including about its atomic weapon. carrying and deep penentration capacity contrasting with other air force combet planes; and

(d) whether the proposed supply of F-16 and raking up of Kashmir controversy by USA is basically meant for forcing India to accept NPT?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L. BHATIA): (a) The US proposal to provide 38 F-16 aircraft and other military equipment to Pakistan in return for a verifiable cap on Pakistan's production of fissile material is, reportedly, still under discussion between the US and Pakistan Governments.

(b) and (c) The F-16 is a multi-role aircraft with improved offensive and defensive capabilities. It is also capable of being modified for delivering nuclear weapons.

(e) of late, the US has not been urging India to sign the NPT. The US has conveyed that the proposal to supply F-16s to Pakistan in return for a verifiable cap on Pakistan's production of fissile material is a bilateral proposal. There has also been some restraint in recent statements by US Government regarding Kashmir.

Pakistan Proposal for Reduction of Tension Between India and Pakistan

6644. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Pakistan is now ready for talks with India and its Foreign Minister was reported to have said that Pakistan would soon be sending two non-papers (Informal documents) to India on reduction of tension and armaments between the two countries; and

(b) if so, the reaction of the Govt. and steps taken to hold talks immediately?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L. BHATIA): (a) and (b): On 21 March, 1994, Government reiterated to the Government of Pakitan its readiness to resolve all bilateral differences peacefully and through negotiations as envisaged under the Simla Agreement, and that the 8th Round of Foreign Secretary-level talks may be resumed accordingly. Pakistan has not given a formal response to the Indian proposal.

Government have come across a media report on march 3, 1994 attributing to the Foreign Minister of Pakistan a statement to the effect that Pakistan would be sending two non-papers to India.